

As Friday, 10/10/66

A TESTIMONY

*From the Yearly Meeting at York the 16th of the
4th Month 1686. To the several Monthly meetings
in the said County or elsewhere greeting, &c.*

Dear Friends,

WE being met together in the Fear of the Lord, and in his precious truth in which he alone doth concern us, for his honour and one anothers good, it hath pleased him in his wonted Kindness to break in amongst us, overshadowing us with his glory, and filling our Assembly with his living presence to our great encouragement and satisfaction, that he is well pleased with this our Service, and doth delight to do us good, and having given us this blessed opportunity, peaceably to enjoy our meeting in the concerns of the Church Affairs, for his Truth and Honour sake. And hath raised among us many living Testimonies. And we have received several Testimonies in writing from divers of our Monthly Meetings to our great satisfaction of the care of Friends on the Truths account: Therefore Dearly Beloved Sisters in the pure and unchangable love of God, wherewith he loved us, and united us, unto himself, and one another, Do we Salute you and in the true freedom of his own Spirit and Glorious liberty of his Sons and Daughters, and heavenly Fellowship of his Gospel of Light, Life, and peace are our hearts enlarged towards you: in that which distance of Miles separates not, for *though absent in body yet present in Spirit,*

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and though we see not the Faces one of another yet are Epistles writen in one anothers hearts, and drink of the Fountain of love, and plentifully feeds of the Bread of Life, living Praises to him for ever, that hath had a regard to the low estate of his Hand-maids *for this is his doing, and it is Marvellous in our eyes,* considering we were Alians and Strangers to him and one to another, so ignorant of that Service and duty we now see we owe to him, and one to another, as we walk in the Light of that glorious day of Reformation and restoration, that he hath caused to dawn upon us, where he is placing his servants and Handmaids, in his new Creation to answer the end of our Creator, in being meet-helps for our Brethren, in serving him and one another, he leading us on in the line of life, as the holy Antients; and in the practice of the Primitive Christians, stirring up and provoking one another, to love and good works, in minding one another to improve the pure gift that is in us. So dear Friends, be ye stirred up to this good work of serving him, and one another; and ever prefer it before your own; and give your attendance with diligence in ev'ry of your respective Womens Monthly meetings to wait upon the Lord for wisdom that he may open more and more your service and Duty to him, and one another and be ye ordered by him in his own gift which serveth him acceptably and seeketh one anothers good, In which let your enquiries be into the Church affairs and be careful to keep under and our all things that may be repugnant to truth; discouraging the evil, and cherishing the good, and do the utmost of your endeavours that nothing be practised amongst us but what tends to the Honour of God, and true comfort one of another, that our Truth like practices, decent good and comly order; and Righteous Government in all things may bespeak us to be of those whom God hath pleased

ced as *Lights in the World*, and made in some measure, as *the salt on the Earth* that in and by all our unspotted Lives, and godly Conversations, yea and in all our undertakings and concerns amongst the children of men we may be an Honour to God and one anothers Joy: So Friends let none that bath put their hand to the Plow draw back, or do the Work of the Lord Negligently or with careless minds, but in pure fear keeping to the light of Christ Jesus that discovers the Enemy in all his transformings, and subtile lying his Baits to catch the Simple and beguile the innocent; that if any professing Truth be indangered thereby, such may timely be exhorted; admonished and reprov'd in Love to their Soules: if haply they take Counsel, escape the danger, and truth be kept clear, they will have cause to bless the Lord on your account, and both rejoyce in him together and if some reject Exhortation and hate to be reformed, tho' such perish in their iniquity, yet the Lord is clear, and his people will be clear, and their blood be on their own heads, and Friends let none plead ignorance or inability, for the Lord is no hard Master, or requireth any thing but what he gives, yet faithfulness and obedience he looks for, at all our hands: So dear Sisters give up your selves, according to your several measures as living members of that heavenly body, all which have not one and the same Office yet all are needful and serviceable in our places: *where the Body Edifieth it self in Love*, and every Member strengthens confirms and build's up one another in our most holy and precious Faith, and let the time past, be sufficient if any there be that yet are as Idle in the Market-place, for it is greatly needful at this time a day such feel their growing into the Service and Vineyard of the Lord as in the true Church of Old, we may be coworkers and fellowhelpers in this blessed work: so not as the careless Daughters of Jerusalem or

Women

Women at ease in Sion, but as those Women which was wise in heart, and whose hearts stirred them up to the work of the Tabernacle, and as Lidia whose heart the Lord opened and as Dorcas concerned in making the Coats and Garments for the Widdows and Fatherless: and as those Women that was Labourers in the Gospel, and as Deborah whose heart was towards the Governours in Israel, yet she complained the high wages were unoccupied, till she arose a Mother in Israel, and an Incourager of her people; And truly Friends many have been the Incouragements we have received from the Lord, who hath been with us, and appeared unto us from time to time in our Womens Meetings, assisting us with his Counsel and shewing us his Will, lying upon us, (and setting before us) the necessity there is for us to be good examples in this behalf, not only unto this Generation, but also to them that are yet to come, by an orderly proceed therein. Leaving upon record our care and concern in that behalf, that as the testimony of others in former Ages have been servicable to us in our day, ours may reach to those that may come after us for their help and encouragement.

So Friends, since it hath pleased the Lord in his love to visit his Servants and Handmaids as in the days of old, and give us a measure of his Spirit and a Talent to profit withal, let none hide it in the earth, for in the Improvement of it many have been the renewings of the pure life and love of God unto us, whereby our hearts are enlarged and fortified unto a perseverance in the performance of our duty and we can truly say for your encouragement in this behalf; often hath the Lord appeared and shed abroad his love in our said Meetings, richly rewarding according to our faithfulness for our service and labour of Love, with Peace and Joy: Therefore dearly beloved Sisters stir up one another and encourage, and travel for your Younger Women that
they

they may grow in grace and vertue, and in the pure fear and love of God; and receive wisdom to take part with you of this labour and care; and so become sharers of the riches of this reward; So dear Sisters in Gods pure Fear, Wisdom and Counsel, let us go on, that the weak may be strengthened, the feeble confirmed; the hungry fed, the naked clothed, the wounded healed, so the breaches in *Sion* made up, and the walls of *Jerusalem* repaired, that *Sions* Beauty may appear to the Nations, and *Jerusalems* Glory to the Inhabitants of the earth. And beware of that rending, dividing, separating Spirit, that old enemy and adversary of *Sions* Prosperity, the breaker of concord, causer of discention and *accuser of the brethren*, but let the dealings of the Lord never be forgotten by us or raced out of our remembrance, but keep with that Power which gathered us in the beginning, when we were scattered here one and there one, Enemies to the Lord, and Aliens one to another, he hath reconciled us to himself again, and united us one to another, where his blessings is multiplyed, and he renews his mercys as the Mornings, and often becoms the place of our broad rivers; wherein our Soules have sweet Solace and Heavenly Communion with him, and one with another where the Saints Solemnity is known and they keep Holy Day together, but this Enemy envying our happiness, and takes all occasions to break our Union and separate us from the Lord again, and one from another, and to lie waste the work, by stirring up wicked Instruments with reflections and bitter Charges on those concerned therein, disturbing and discouraging, and that sometimes in pretence of pleading Liberty for tender Conscience, calling it Imposition an Formes, so Subtly *transforming himselfe as into an Angel Light, to deceive (if it were possible) the very Elect.*

Friends in the Elect seed our safety is; where we can

be deceived, whatsoever his pretence be, we see his end is that he may go loose and unreproved ; to ensnare the simple and betray the Innocent, and so bring in Floods of confusion and disorders to the dishonour of God and grief of his People; *the Lord rebuke him* is our Prayers ; and keep us near and dear unto himself and one to another, and Zealous for his Truth, and as the Valliants of *Israel* who each kept their Sword girded upon their thigh, and as the Ancient *Jews* which built the walls of *Jerusalem* carrying on the work with one hand and held their Weapon in the other, tho then the subtil one wrought misteriously sometimes scoffing at the feebleness of those employed, divers wayes sought to stop the work then, and to cause the weak to fear it might prove to their greater bondage ; it is the very same at this day, God Almighty preserve us is the travel of our Spirits and keep our sight clear, and give us wisdom, and make us of undaunted Spirits as *Jael*, to put our hand to the work of smiting *Israels* enemy, that the Church may have rest and Songs of Triumph as in *Deborahs* dayes : So dear Sisters we recommend you to the pure gift of God in every conscience, and commits you to the Word of his grace, which will keep both you and us, as we are subject thereto ; in true Innocency, and right simplicity and heavenly unity which is imable at this day as ever it was in the dayes of Old, when rightly compared to the *dew of Hermon* where the *Morning stars still sing together*, and the *Saints do shout for Joy*, where be *voice of thanksgiving and Melody is heard*, and a heavenly harmony kept ; and here is no Jarr. Praises unto the Lord or God, who over all is worthy, for ever and ever, *Amen.*

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*It is desired that this Epistle may be Read in your several
particular Meetings.*

